

Some years ago, Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs approached consultant Michelle Alexis, now Portfolio Manager for Inclusion at the BBC, to develop our own understanding and learning. Taking a whole organisational approach, Michelle delivered training and facilitated group work to help us develop our own action plan. With Michelle's knowledge, lived experience, positivity and encouragement, we were able to identify gaps and build a plan taking a 3-tiered approach: organisation; staff and clubs. Actions identified were then built into our organisational strategy.

At the same time, Michelle developed and delivered workshops to clubs to build their awareness and support them to make the first steps to developing their own anti-racist practice, so that every child can feel welcomed, included and reach their full potential.

One of the first things we implemented from our plan, was to start using an inclusive decision-making tool. This is a simple and effective way to help us ensure we consider everyone in key plans and decisions. With time, we found that anti-racist considerations happen more instinctively and, with the help of topic champions, are kept at the forefront of our learning, discussions, resources and decision making.

There is a need to truly reflect and include all people that make up our communities in management roles, staffing and children and families using services, and we developed a short video to promote clubs and Playwork as a career, taking heed to ensure diverse representation to encourage and motivate others. Hear why diversity in the Out of School Childcare workforce is important from Playworker and Trustee Areatha Comanescu [here](#).

As DARPL (Diversity and Anti-Racist Professional Learning) training become available, we were able to refresh and update our training across the organisation. One of our Childcare Business Development Officers (CBDO) explains:

“More than anything, it has made me stop, think and adapt my ways and thinking about how I see others. It has made me embrace diversity more and want to improve my knowledge. I encourage settings to embrace all celebrations and festivals and I make them aware that encouraging children and parents to share their own experiences is also beneficial, along with having diverse toys/books/wall displays, to play with and look at.”

Of course, learning is an ongoing process and we have been building a library of useful articles and books for our own staff. Another of our CBDOs says

“The DARPL training made me realise anti-racism is a ball we need to keep up in the air and never let it drop. A daunting course to attend without knowing what to expect but as the trainer taught us, now is the time to be brave and talk in order to truly learn. As a sector we can make a difference to the lives of children, now and in the future but we need to keep the conversation going and embed anti-racism in everything we do. The DARPL training is the first step of a very important journey, but it mustn't end there – the work and commitment that we do after the training is what will truly make a difference.”

As awareness and learning filtered through staff, so our resources for the sector evolved. Exploring and celebrating diversity of Welsh backgrounds will support all children to have a broad understanding of themselves and each other. This is equally important in diverse communities and in communities that are not as diverse. Whilst we had always taken care to celebrate a range of cultures, we stepped up our approach and the play activities in our weekly bulletins and quarterly newsletter become more diverse and a webinar and resource, celebrating diversity was delivered to our clubs. We updated and shared our Equality Play Checklist and suggestions on books, arts and crafts, toys and games, music and outside play reflecting the whole range of diversity.

We also developed a Equality, Diversity and Inclusion themed [Y Bont newsletter](#), a '10 Ways...' resource on how to promote diversity for the next generation, racial microaggressions and '10 ways to help your setting recognise and celebrate cultural diversity'. We have also been able to use local funding to purchase specific books and resources to promote diversity for clubs in some areas.

A series of resources: 'My Rights in My Out of School Club' can also be used to support the children to understand their rights and feed into settings' key policies, some of which are particularly relevant to respecting diversity such as UNCRC Articles 14 and 7 - a right to follow your own religion and to a name and nationality.

We were really pleased that one of our Trustees successfully applied for the role of Welsh Government's **Childcare and Playwork Community Mentors** to directly influence anti-racist policy and practice in the sector. Our Trustee Areatha tells us about her experiences and insights in her blog [here](#).

"Stereotypes and preconceived ideas about people of colour can cause division and create barriers for people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds. It is important that this is addressed when looking at the Childcare and Playwork sector and that the voices of those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds are not just heard, but really listened to. We all need to commit to creating an environment that is inclusive and welcoming for our staff and for the families accessing our provision."

A potential area of work where we can make a significant impact is through our delivery of Playwork qualifications. Qualifying close to 100 Playworkers a year, who potentially engage with at least 1000 children, the Training Team mandate that Playwork Apprentices undertake anti-racist research and encourage them to undertake further training. They are planning for one of the Community Mentors to talk to learners about the impact of the DARPL training and create a stand-alone video resource.

In our latest National Club Survey, we included questions exploring how anti-racism is encouraged within settings and it was heartening to see a real desire for continuing professional development in this area with high numbers of settings having already undertaken anti-racist training and a high number wanting to improve their understanding and knowledge.

We remain very much committed to enriching the diversity of the organisation, especially as we continue to grow the organisation, recruit new Trustees and qualify Playworkers and are trying to build our contacts with individuals and organisations that support and represent Global Majorities in Wales.

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